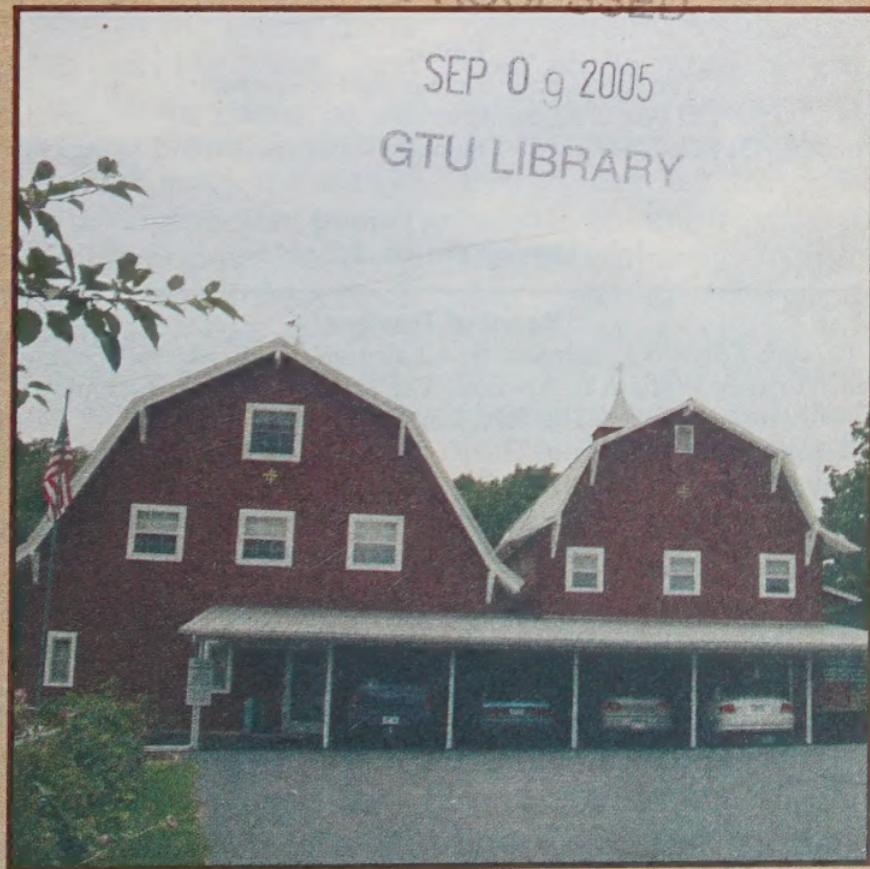




# The Anglican Digest



MICHAELMAS A.D. 2005

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## Cats, Sheep, Tax Collectors, and Sinners

The responsible, law abiding people of the day were shocked that Jesus met with sinners and ate with them. They imagined Jesus chasing after the sinful members of society, catching them, and enacting Godly justice. The sinners represented all that was wrong with the world and the righteous people wanted them gone. Yet Jesus went to the sinners, sat among them, even ate with them. Jesus invited them into the kingdom and they often responded by embracing this new gospel of grace and forgiveness.

As Jesus tells the parable of the lost sheep in Luke's gospel (15.1-10), it is in response to the offense taken by his stance among the sinners rather than against them. Jesus wants to make a point with the harsh crowd and asks them, "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go

after the one which is lost, until he finds it?" Here, and other places in the four gospels, Jesus draws parallels between sinners and sheep.

I don't know much about sheep but, from what I read, they sound a lot like cats. If you chase after a cat, it instinctively runs away. Cats are skittish and jumpy and they scurry up trees before they even know what it is they're running from. We don't catch cats; we get them to come to us. And to do that one has to get in the same general vicinity and then be still as he calls to the cat. They can then watch us and make a determination about us. Most of them really do want to come to us, but they're so easily frightened we have to be careful. Apparently sheep are the same way: they frighten easily; they scamper off; they run and hide. And shepherds have to go out looking for them. They have to go to the general vicinity and be still and call for the sheep. The sheep measure the voice and the intent of the shepherd and come out of their hiding

places. One doesn't catch sheep; one calls them out. One doesn't catch cats; one invites them to come. At least with cats and presumably with sheep, once they come, things change drastically. The skittish animal calms down and becomes affectionate, curling up in safety and transforming radically. Perhaps in that safety we see the true nature of the cat, and the sheep, as they become lovable.

Sinners - you and I - are probably much like sheep, Jesus would say. We're a lot like cats. We frighten easily. We run and hide before thinking much about the situation in front of us. We're trying to protect ourselves and we see much danger in our world. Some of the things we've done, or not done, haunt us and our hearts are jumpy. We fear being caught and judged and punished. But what Jesus did with the sinners in his day is precisely what he does with us: he comes among us, is still, and calls out to us, inviting us to come closer to him, to be safe in his

presence, so that our truer natures can be developed. In his presence, we can find that peace which transforms us and allows us to be lovable. We really do have two natures and Christ is able to draw out the truest of them, the one that comes from God himself.

Christ is not chasing us to punish us. He has come among us to call us, to invite us into his kingdom. Jesus wasn't telling the righteous people that the kingdom did not include them; he was inviting them in just as he was inviting the sinners in. In the eyes of Christ, all are sinners, and all are invited to follow. Listen for his voice. Be not afraid. In his arms your truest nature will be revealed. You will become lovable and you will learn to love. The peace you are chasing will embrace you, give you your heart's desire, and make you new.

- *The Rev. Robert C.  
Wisnewski, Jr.,  
St. John's,  
Montgomery, Alabama*

## *Giving Ourselves*

*"Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back"*

(Luke 6:38, NRSV)

P.T. Forsythe, an Anglican theologian, wrote, "Those who do not have someone within them who is above them will inevitably give themselves over to what is around them." Such is the description of those who have not given themselves over to God: they inevitably give themselves over to what is around them. They have no center except for their own feelings, shaped and formed by their surroundings. They are captives to their culture, blindly mimicking the thoughts of our culture's pundits, and adopting our culture's fashions and attitudes without internal reflection. All they know is what they have heard someone else say.

By contrast, those who have given themselves over to

Christ do have a center: it is the new nature of Jesus Christ, a renewed heart reformed by the Spirit of God. God has given us an anchor in the storm of life, a focal point for reflection, and a source of true joy. We have eternity within our mortal bodies, and that gives us a hope that can never be taken away.

It is because of that renewed heart that we are called to be givers. It is the act of giving to others that connects us to that renewed heart that is within us. You see, "God so loved the world that he gave" (John 3:16), and whenever we give, we are acting in concert with God's giving nature that lies within our renewed hearts. When we will to lovingly give to another, God automatically releases the strength of his divine nature and forges it to our action. It is in giving, that we find our deepest connection to God and are blessed by the benediction of his grace upon our service. That's why St. Francis writes, "It is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned."

Such giving is only possible because we have first given ourselves over to Christ. When our hearts are given over to God, we walk in a peace that all will be well because we know that God watches over us with his love. We have a freedom from anxiety because we can entrust our lives to God. He will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on him.

We only have so much energy. Either we will use it worrying about ourselves or we will use it to give ourselves to others. So here's the prescription: At the start of each day choose to give yourself to God. Thank him that he is keeping you in his protection and love. Cast your cares upon him because he cares for you. Then ask him to help you be a giver to others.

God will show you where and how to give; it will bring joy to your life.

- *The Rev. Greg Brewer,  
Church of the  
Good Samaritan,  
Paoli, Pennsylvania*

## *Shaped by the Word*

It is truly energizing and uplifting to have one's closets and drawers clean and organized. When I accomplish that, I vow to keep things neat and orderly, always to return every item to its designated place. Yet, as I become immersed in the "busyness" of each day, I find that I hurriedly cram things away, stuffing items whatever there may be a bit of space. While my closed drawers and closets may appear orderly on the exterior, the interiors are in total disorder!

Our personal interiors may also be in similar disarray. Our culture impresses within us an idea that we must have "instant gratification" of all our needs. This is a byproduct of our busy lifestyle, which is crammed full of "doing." So, also, we may engage in a "hurry up" mode of reading scripture! Perhaps, during Lent we made an effort to cleanse our inner "junk" by taking time to be with the Lord, faithfully reading God's word daily, albeit hurriedly. As the joy of

the Easter Season waned, so did our good intentions. Our spiritual disciplines, so carefully established, somehow fell by the wayside. Does this sound familiar?

Even when we are conscientious about setting aside time for God, we may allow the things of the world and our busy lifestyle to intrude. We read the daily scripture rapidly and informationally, then dash back to our activities. In reading the Bible in this way, we remain in control of the text, and do not allow ourselves to "inwardly digest" God's Word, and let him change our hearts. If we insist on being so available to and distracted by our worldly endeavors, we cannot simultaneously be available to God!

Thus, the helter-skelter pace of our lives can become the enemy of our relationship with God. We need to retreat from this enemy, finding a quiet place, a refuge where we can be alone with the Lord, and allow his word to soak deeply within us, to penetrate our hearts. "Be still, and know that I am God." (Ps. 46:10)

In our spiritual formation group, *Shaped by the Word*, we experience the power of God's word internalized. As we give God time and access to us, and yield ourselves to the text of his word, we are allowing him to speak his truth in HIS way to our hearts. This reverses our usual role of controlling and manipulating the text for our own purposes. By allowing God entrance to our hearts, we are becoming "His workmanship" (Eph. 2:10). God encounters us in those places where we are not in conformity with the image of Christ. Through this engaging and powerful process, we permit ourselves to be "...transformed into his likeness" (II Cor. 3:18). Now that is the kind of interior clean-up that lasts!

*"But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yield its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."* (Ps 1:2-3)

- via COURIER,  
Cathedral Church of St. Luke,  
Orlando, Florida

## Visitation and Adoration

Visits of adoration overcome the vagaries of life and work. There are many who cannot be present at a weekday Mass but they are almost always in reach of a church where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. Time spent in the Presence of Divine Humility, for every tabernacle speaks volumes of the self-emptying of the Incarnate God, has a way of growing into the very warp and weft of our lives. Many years ago I made a visit to the Chapel of the Order of St. Anne in Arlington Heights, Massachusetts. In the midst of the High Altar was an ancient, at least by American standards, Tabernacle. According to the Convent guide book, the door of this Tabernacle has a fifteenth century carved figure of our Lord. What struck me was the subject of the carving: our Lord with his hands bound — a fitting symbol of how he voluntarily submits to be bound in the tabernacle itself. Beyond the privilege of mak-

ing our communions, can anything be more wonderful than the right to come at any time into our Lord's Presence, a presence voluntarily offered?

In an article for the *Living Church* Fr. John Desaulniers' relates something of the common experience of those who make a regular practice of visitation and adoration. Most can easily connect with the experience of the "gift of divine humility" whereby he had an experiential knowledge that my whole life was in submission to, and contained in, this transitory bit of eternity. A submission to the reality that this pale disc was greater than I and all I possessed, beyond what I would ever be, or hope to be; and yet it was God in Christ saying, "This is so, you can be me in your world. 'This is your life; this is reality'" What marks this experience and all similar experiences is the freedom that comes from shutting down the many "voices in our heads"; so that we might hear the One who is always present to us.

Adoration not only helps us do just that, but it cultivates a vision that enters both the mystery of the oneness that is ours in Christ while illuminating a brokenness that we must embrace to be an outpouring of sustenance for a hungry world.

The presence of our incarnate Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of his Body and Blood reserved is of inestimable value to the spiritual life of the Church because it draws together all the threads of God's appearing. It is both a place of "thinness" and concreteness. It draws all sorts and conditions of people into conversation with God, while exposing us to lines of interconnectedness that defy the many boundaries we erect to give ourselves a sense of stability and worth. When it becomes a place to enter into conversation with the heart and mind of God a proper perspective is brought to bear on the inducements and offerings of the world, showing both their potential for good and their inability to take the place of what we

truly need. The Blessed Sacrament reserved is both a place of pilgrimage and the place to take measure of our pilgrimages. Familiarity with the ways of God and the cultivation of community-mindedness is an objective of the devotions to the Blessed Sacrament that have grown up over time in various parts of the Church. As we have seen, however, the desire works both ways—for by the means of the sacrament of his Body and Blood, our Lord hopes to draw us into a warm and familiar relationship that sustains and transforms us into the people God dreams of us becoming.

—The Very Rev. William Willoughby, III, St. Paul's,  
Savannah, Georgia



## Casual Christianity

A few years ago, George Barna, who produces polling data that is helpful in analyzing the church in modern day America, came up with some findings that were not very encouraging. In a study of "moral behavior" the sad conclusion was that for the most part Christians are very much like the world when it comes to behavior. In areas like abortion, internet pornography, lying, adultery and pre-marital sex, the church looked slightly better than the world. Statistically there was some difference, but for the most part the church looked far too much like the world.

It seems that what the church is producing today are churchgoers instead of disciples for Christ. Churchgoers could be summarized as: comfortable; convenient; casual; cultural; compromised.

Comfortable Christianity is faith without suffering. Willingness to suffer for the faith is normative in the Christian experience throughout the world. We have seen that suffering in areas

like Uganda, Nigeria, Rwanda and the Sudan.

Convenient Christianity has self at the center, not Christ. Churchgoers tend to worship when they want to worship, work when they want to work, give what they want to give and participate in only those programs that suit them. Sacrifice is not in the vocabulary. The disciplines of study, ministry, stewardship, prayer and witness are seen as options rather than a commitment to growing in Christ.

Casual Christianity is like the seed that was sown in the shallow soil. There may be an initial excitement about the faith, but without depth. When difficulty or other priorities come they quickly wither.

Cultural Christianity is a faith that is more influenced by the world around us than by the kingdom of God. Culture, not kingdom sets priorities. Church takes second place to the social activities on the calendar. When confronted with a choice, far too often the world wins. Only committed disciples make the choice

for the eternal things of the kingdom.

Compromised Christians have lost the fire and passion of the Gospel. This is what happened to the church of Ephesus in the Revelation. Jesus said to them: "Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love." (Rev. 2:4) The Christians at Ephesus had lost their passion for Jesus Christ. Today we see that the message of repentance and new life in Christ is watered down. Many Christians want to hear what makes them "feel good" rather than be challenged by the Gospel. Only when lives are transformed and the power of God through Word, Sacraments and Spirit is present will the Church thrive.

It is through the cross that our sins are forgiven and we are brought into a right relationship with God. It is through the resurrection of Jesus Christ that we are given the hope of eternal life with God. May the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ shape and transform your life that you will have a pas-

sion for the good news that God has given us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- *The Rev. William T. Luley,  
St. Luke's,  
Manchester, Missouri*

### Milestones

My faith gives my life meaning. One of the things I have been trying to figure out recently is how to pass it on. I read an article by the Rev. Dick Hardel, a Lutheran minister with the Youth and Family Institute. He talks about "Faithlife Milestones." These can be about any event in the life of a child, youth or adult, which is that the event is somehow significant for your family. It is so simple.

Find a container - it can be a wooden bowl, a plate or a tray. Look around your house for a container you already have. Whatever you select, it becomes the milestones blessing altar. Now place your altar somewhere that you and the other people in your household will see daily.

You have several choices for what to put in your container. You can find some smooth stones and draw a symbol or words with markers or paint to represent the milestone. Or you can select some small object that is symbolic of an event. You might draw a picture of the event on an index card. Or you might write a word, e.g., Confirmation on a small rock.

Once you have created your altar, what are milestones on our faith journey that we might want to commemorate? Here are some ideas:

- Baptism
- Starting school
- New friendship
- First communion
- Confirmation
- Getting a new pet
- Beginning middle school, high school or college
- Getting a drivers license
- Graduation
- Birth or adoption of a child
- A new job
- Entering the military
- A new home
- End of a relationship
- Acute illness or injury
- Death of a loved one
- Whatever milestones we

choose it is important to make note of the event with some sort of worship.

**We Come Together** - this could be around the family table or at a special meal. Or it might be two friends sitting together and sharing.

**Name the Milestone** - Where does our family life intersect our faith? What are the special events or moments that we want to remember? It is a time for us to identify the event and see how God is present in our life.

**Offer the Event to God** - Offer a blessing and place the memento in your dish. Be creative. If the event is significant in your family's life, it is an opportunity to grow in faith. You might also want to identify several significant milestones in your life up to this point and create some sort of token to represent those parts of your faith story that got you to this point in your journey.

Milestones fill our days and weeks and years. We all have them. What are the milestones you celebrate with your family to pass on your faith?

- Susan Haas, via St. Dunstan's,  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

## Buon Giorno

Buon giorno (good morning, good afternoon in Italian). Well, I thought I should say something in Italian after a wonderful, ten-day trip to Italy. The problem is that I'm not very good with languages. For Christmas, Janelee gave me a DVD on basic Italian plus a book on Italian phrases. I actually did spend some time listening, saying the words out loud, and studying the phrases. I actually thought I did pretty well, but all over Italy patient Italians gently corrected me or tried to be of some assistance. Oh, I could order three types of coffee and say thank you and thank you very much. I could inquire about the location of a bathroom and say thank you and thank you very much (for the information). I could order one of three types of beverages generally consumed as cold although I never got the word for "ice" correct. Actually it was through practice and trial and error and, of course, through the graciousness of

the people I encountered that I received the things I had hoped for.

I find that learning to be a Christian and living the Christian life are much the same as my experience with the Italian language. We can read books, listen to tapes and DVDs, and even practice saying the right Christian things, but we'll never get it quite right until we work to live it out in the Christian community. If we try, and if we listen to those with real experience and knowledge accepting their gentle corrections and suggestions, we'll begin to experience Christ's promise of life and life abundantly.

Just as learning to get around in Italy was a joyful process, living the Christian life can too be a joyful experience, particularly when we begin to take ourselves less seriously and the Lord more seriously.

— The Rev. Eugene Wise,  
St. Paul's,  
Murfreesboro, Tennessee

## *Our Church at Sea*

The main section of our church is the Nave. The transepts are outriggers. We are headed 90 due east—Augusta or bust! We have two new gangplanks port-side, but some of us still scramble aboard up the rope ladder at the stern.

Early church leaders often spoke of our faith as a ship, like Noah's ark, the only refuge from the chaotic outer darkness of the sea all around us. The many aspects of the image allowed them to argue conflicting points of doctrine while appealing to it. The same is true for us as we look for an authentic way to be and to guide the church at 3rd and Topeka in our day.

Some heavily committed members may feel like galley slaves and think they see the oar holes in the wall. Others of us may pine for the cruise ship model and wonder how we can attract high-class paying customers on an interminable trip to Augusta without really great food and entertainment, perhaps including a casino.

I have done just enough sailing on small craft to sense how much there is to learn about guiding a boat through the fickle demands of wind and water. Too little pressure on the tiller and you've got luffing and loss of momentum—too much and you must come about quick or be dead in the water. On Cheney Lake the spirit truly blows wherever it pleases with little warning of the changes. It takes talent and long practice to do it well, but I enjoy watching someone who can play the wind like a Strad. I feel that we are practicing these kinds of skills at St. John's.

Builders often respond to the chaos of wind and water by designing ships that are big enough to be impervious to most weather—like the Titanic. But when you do hit an iceberg that you hadn't thought to look for, the whole operation can end up in outer darkness. Of course you need good charts, too.

A few of us remember a time when we could sail around a spacious and calm establishment harbor, send-

ing our spirit and influence in all directions. There has been a sea change—no land in sight—wind and sea picking up. Dig into the chart box! Here's one, number 525:

*The Church's one foundation  
is ... Jesus Christ her Lord;*

*She is his new creation by  
water ... and the word:*

*From heaven he came and  
sought her to be his holy bride;*

*With his own blood ... he  
bought her, and for her life ... he  
dies.*

— David Childs, via  
*St. John's PARISH VISITOR,*  
Wichita, Kansas

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*Thesis from a Seminary Door . . .*

## Rock Lobster



People still come up to me and ask, "Why did you get in such a lather over the events of the last General Convention? I thought you were all about Grace. But then you, and others who feel as you do, just got so... heavy all of a sudden."

The question stays with me. What is and what really was the big deal about the approval of one man to a particular diocese of the Church?

Here is what it was, and still is:

It was never about sexuality as such. It is not about a behavior, nor about a predisposition. What it is about is anthropology, soteriology, and Christology. Those are big words. They are also big ideas.

First, to anthropology: We disagree with the advocates for the "present incumbent of the See of New Hampshire" (as the Windsor Report puts it gracefully) because we have a darker and we think

empirically more incisive picture of the human condition. We believe in Original Sin, and that life is not all about "choices" and the "freedom to be me." Life is rather about constraints and self-damage and enduring self-deceptions. Our anthropology is low.

We are also hooked on soteriology, which is the idea of salvation. We need a Savior, in our paralyzed boundness and in our compulsion to make poor choices. We do not begin with the doctrine of creation. We begin with the appalled need of the human race for salvation.

We are focussed on Christology, the Man who took upon himself the sin of the world, and in our place gave us an unaccused place to stand.

In short, we are not about empowerment (except as a fruit from prior abject repentance and counter-intuitive belovedness). We are not about justice as such - for "who can stand when he appeareth" (G.F. Handel by way of Malachi). We are not

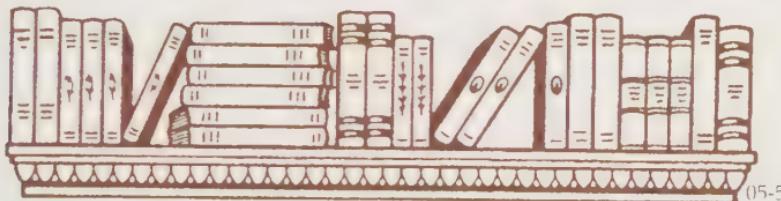
about rights, for there is One righteous and only One (Psalm 14:1).

What happened in the Church in 2003, and will be playing out for years to come, was about human nature's condition, its hopelessness on its own terms, and our hope for Another, the Savior. The "political" problem in the Church was and is simply code, to quote good Leander Harding, for issues that have primally to do with the salvation of the whole world.

*- The Very Rev. Dr. Theol.  
Paul F.M. Zahl, Dean and  
President Trinity Episcopal  
School for Ministry,  
Ambridge, Pennsylvania*



# CREAM OF THE CROP



(05-5)

The Fall selection of the ANGLICAN BOOK CLUB is *Glory Descending: A Michael Ramsey Reader* edited by Douglas Dales. The two most influential members of the Church of England in the twentieth century, says David Edwards, onetime Canon of Southwark, are John Stott and Michael Ramsey. The latter was one of the greatest of the Archbishops of Canterbury.

Rowan Williams freely admits to the profound influence of Michael Ramsey, a man of great spiritual depth who inspired a generation of Anglicans. Apart from one or two exceptions, his books are out of print, and many will welcome this new selection of his writings. Arranged around the church's year, it explores all the great themes of the Christian faith and is ideal for devotional reading, for study and for sermon preparation.



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## Fellowship

When we think about the life of a parish, many things come to mind. As a priest, I immediately think of the liturgical life of the Body of Christ: How do we worship God? What is the nature of our praise? Are we concentrating our lives in prayer? Those of more theological bent will concentrate on the theological endeavors within a parish, the classes and studies that are going on. Too often, one of the overlooked areas of parish life is fellowship.

Fellowship is more than simply getting together for a good time. Christian fellowship is about partaking of the nature of God. As we gather to break bread, to share our thoughts, our prayers and dreams, we mirror the interior nature of the Godhead. The One True God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and within that triune nature of God there is fellowship between the Persons. One of my favorite stories in the Old Testament is that of Abraham

receiving the three mysterious visitors. The Early Church Fathers, and commentators since, see in this episode God visiting the patriarch. It is God who visits Abraham, but in the guise of three, for God is three persons. Abraham sets a feast for his guests, and all sup together, eating the fatted calf and all the other good things that Sarah would have prepared for them. This same story has given rise to a marvelous icon of the Trinity. In it, the three Persons of the Trinity are seated around a low table, partaking of a feast, breaking bread together, engaging in fellowship.

Of course, the act of Christian fellowship also has

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eucharistic overtones. From the story of the feeding of the five thousand, from the vignettes we have of Jesus eating with all manner of people, from his presence at the wedding feast at Cana, and preeminently from the Last Supper, we gain a deep understanding of the central place that fellowship around the table has in the life of the Christian community.

It is surely no accident that Jesus' post-resurrection appearances center around fellowship: being known "in the breaking of the bread" on the road to Emmaus, eating with the Apostles in the Upper Room, or preparing breakfast for the Apostles on the shore of the Sea of Galilee.

One of the most poignant of images in the New Testament, which might surprise you, has this theme of table fellowship at its heart: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat

with him, and he with me." There is something very important, spiritual, even heavenly, which happens when disciples gather for breaking of bread.

As I noted above, Christian fellowship mirrors an interior reality of God. Saint Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo and great theologian of the Church, wrote a treatise on the Trinity and noted that "the Holy Spirit is the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son," and further that the Spirit serves as "an ineffable communion of the Father and the Son." Other writers have translated Augustine's writings as saying that the Spirit is the love that is shared between the Father and the Son. When you and I gather together at table, and open ourselves to the moving of the Spirit, we are part of that same love of Father and Son, the love that builds us up into the Body of Christ.

— *The Rev. J. Mark Goodman,  
Trinity,  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina*

## *The Doctrine of God*

The substance of Christianity is found in the doctrine of God. It is not to be found primarily even in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, because it is in Jesus that we find God revealed, and Jesus seeks him and his will above all else. Moreover, the doctrine of the Incarnation depends upon the doctrine of God; we cannot understand who Jesus is without an understanding of the Blessed Trinity.

There have been two words traditionally used to describe the attributes of God. They are transcendence and immanence.

*Transcendence* is the way of thinking about God in his being above and beyond created existence. This is to speak of God in the being of his perfections. In this way he is other than we are, and we can think more clearly about his otherness if we understand that he is not being or life or knowing or acting in the sense of finite creatures. Creatures have the

limits of their being in relation to other beings. But God has no relation to anything outside of himself. All things exist in relation to him as their source and end.

Transcendence, therefore, has to do with all those things about God in himself, being and life and wisdom and love and beauty and power and goodness - all the attributes which are the essence of his life. And so to Moses, out of the unconsumed, fiery bush, God reveals himself absolute, self-sufficient being, "I am that I am" (Exodus 3:14). In the Epistle of James we are told of God's unvarying goodness, "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17). And in the prophet Malachi, we hear of God's eternal nature as the source of his property always to have mercy, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob

are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6).

These attributes of God are beyond and above all created things, beyond all finite existence, and above the mode of contingent things which depend upon the creative and redemptive will of God.

*Immanence* is the way of thinking about God as he is known through creation. It is to know him in his will and acts outside of himself. To consider the immanence of God is to grasp something of how all things depend upon him. In himself, God transcends all things, but through his wisdom, goodness, and power, he wills to establish all things in the order of their existence.

*Creation*, then, has its own mode of being and life and wisdom and love and beauty and power and goodness. But these attributes of creation are given, and multiplied, and shared unequally among many different things. None of them is absolute or sufficient to itself. Without exception, they all,

each one, depend upon God as their originative source and definitive end. When this dependence is truly understood, then creation speaks clearly of what it itself is and what it is not. In this way creation may recognize its creaturely status as derived from God's eternal reality.

And so the Psalmist proclaims, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth" (Psalm 33:6). Of Job God inquires, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare, if thou hast understanding" (Job 38:4). St. Paul holds mankind accountable for this knowledge, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans 1:20). And in another place, quoting the poets of the Gentiles, Paul adds, "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

God is immanent in the acts of "creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life" (Book of Common Prayer, p.19). He is near to us, nearer than we are to ourselves, and yet he is also far from us, other than we are, in the infinite mystery of his being.

The meanings of *transcendence* and *immanence* can both be seen in another truth of Theology, namely the unity of God. God is one. There is no room in spiritual reality for a multitude of gods. God is spirit, absolute and infinite. His being is, in every sense, perfect and nothing that is of his nature, nothing that is of the nature of divine spirit, falls outside of him. This was the testimony God gave to Israel from the beginning.

Once more we hear from the Law of Moses, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt worship the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:4, 5).

Isaiah takes up this claim with the fervor of prophetic boldness, "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me" (46:9). And David sings, "For thou art great, and doest wondrous things: thou art God alone" (Psalm 86:10). To think of his transcendence and immanence, of the otherness and the nearness of God, we must keep in mind that he is one. His being is perfect. He holds all else together by the power of his word.

Finally, the doctrine of God is incomplete if we do not know the reality of divine personality. It is here that we enter the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, here that we find the only possible understanding of the Incarnation of the Son of God. God is triune. He is three persons in one nature. Each of the persons is the totality of the divine essence - possessing all the attributes of the divine being - the life and wisdom and love and beauty and power and goodness and every

other attribute that is God's own. The history of Theology has done its best to comprehend how this is so. The truth of this doctrine is something that we will grow into as we draw closer to God.

The word *trinity* does not appear in the New Testament, but the reality of God as Trinity is revealed there nonetheless. Its first definitive form comes at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel, where Jesus instructs the disciples to baptize all nations "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:19). The fact that the baptismal formula speaks of the persons distinctly, each with the definite article *the* set before the person, shows their true distinction. And yet, because these three are said to make up *the name*, and not *names*, in which all are to be baptized, their unity is equally true to their distinction. They are three persons in one nature. How God can be one nature in three persons has been the question, contem-

plation, and reflection of Christians for millennia. What we must remember and hold dear is that the mystery of the Godhead, the one unity of God, both transcendent and immanent, is the life and inner relations of the Father and the Son and the Spirit.

Here only this can be said. Jesus tells us that he shared the glory of the Father before the world was. (John 17:5). Furthermore, he tells us that the Spirit of Truth proceeds from the Father, in his (Jesus') name to indwell believers. (John 14:16,17,26). Nothing less than God can indwell us to make us holy. He cannot and will not share the act of indwelling humankind with any creature or idol. We have seen that demonstrated in Jesus who is both God and man. The glorious truth is that the Spirit is equal to him as he is to the Father.

- *The Rev. Dr. Michael L. Carreker,  
St. John's,  
Savannah, Georgia*



## HILLSPEAKING

**W**E HAVE a mystery on our hands here at Hillspeak.

*Where were the martins?*

For the past quarter century or so they have been as regular as clockwork. We know that we need to get the houses cleaned and up on the poles by the second week in March so the scouts can locate them, ascertain their suitability and report back to the others. And then, just as regularly, the flock will show up on or about St Joseph's Day to set up housekeeping.

Along about the middle of August they will have raised their brood, taught the fledglings to fly on their own, and then en masse they leave Hillspeak for another year.

That did not happen this year and we do not know why. What we do know is that we missed them very much. We missed being chided by them when we mowed

or walked too close to their nests. We missed watching Mama and Papa Martin bring food to their nestlings. We missed watching them feed on the wing (what a hard way to get one's supper!). In the evening they swooped and swirled in their pursuit of flying insects and every now and then we would hear a contented, shrill *shreeee*, indicating a martin had caught a particularly fat and juicy gnat or mosquito. The aerial acrobatics were, by far, the best show of the evening.

We missed all of that this past spring and summer. We had our other birds—cardinals, robins, red-winged blackbirds, wrens, finches, even a pair of roadrunners—and we enjoyed them all, but we did miss the martins.

Maybe next St Joseph's Day they will be back with us.

— *The Trustees' Warden*

## *Statement to Our Readers*

THE ANGLICAN DIGEST has had a calling for the last 47 years to the ministry of the printed word to the Episcopal Church and to the Anglican Communion. During those years, we have sent the Digest to individuals, families, and institutions. In recent years, the mailing list has numbered well over 100,000. We have never received support from more than 20% of our mailing list but that did not deter us because we were focused on the proclamation of the Gospel, not on making a profit.

In this period of controversy in the Episcopal Church, we have seen a decline in financial support for the ministry of THE ANGLICAN DIGEST. While we intend to continue our long-standing policy of sending TAD to anyone who wishes to receive it, we want to be good stewards of our resources. We can continue to send the Digest only to those who have indicated their wish to receive TAD by hav-

ing made a recent donation to the ministry or by communicating their desire to continue receiving TAD to us by mail, e-mail, or telephone. Contact information is on the inside front cover of the Digest.

Rather than use our precious resources mailing TAD to those whom we are not sure are reading or benefiting from the magazine, we will be paring our mailing list to stop the flow of red ink. If you are one of those who will be affected, there will be a message saying, "This will be your last issue unless we hear from you. Please see page 26," printed on the mailing panel of this issue, just above your address.

We appreciate our readers and, thanks to the generosity of our readers who give, have always been able to send THE ANGLICAN DIGEST to everyone who has asked to receive it, regardless of ability to financially support the ministry. In order to continue this ministry into the future, we must hear from you so we can know the magazine is being read and we are being wise stewards of our resources.

## The Bible - Read It

Confession, it is said, is good for the soul. Herewith a confession: I have never read *Gone With the Wind*, nor have I seen the movie. On occasions, when I have confessed this, people have expressed surprise, given my clear and defining trait as a Southerner. I simply have not gotten around to reading the book, and it is not on my present list. I'll worry about it tomorrow.

At the same time, one cannot say I am ignorant of the general sweep of the story. It would have been impossible to grow up in the South in the days of my youth and not absorb some of the imagery. Once, the movie came to Columbia in a re-release, and the public schools even gave excused absences to those who wished to see it. Billy Graham could not have drawn a more devout group. The general cultural climate did its own work in promoting the romantic image of Dixie's moonlight and magnolias. Of course, not every-

one saw it that way, but that is another matter, and not the point here. That a general familiarity was easy to come by is what I am trying to say. At the same time, it is essential to state that there is no substitute for reading the book itself if one really wants to know the story.

These thoughts shed light on the current situation with respect to the Bible's place in the Church. Until very recent years, I believe it was possible to gain a passing familiarity of the thrust of the Bible's narrative and principles without actually reading it. So pervasive was Biblical thought, including morality and virtue, that even skeptics moved more or less within its orbit. Secularists who would never dream of using Biblical imagery to make a point could, without blushing, speak of "Good Samaritan laws", or issue a warning not to judge lest one be judged, or speculate here in Washington on "the powers that be", while never, ever realizing they are using Biblical imagery. The list of such things could be much

longer indeed. Only Shakespeare comes close to such impact on our way of thought and expression, and often there, too, without direct attribution.

When I was in seminary, one of my esteemed professors used to tell us it is amazing how much light the biblical text sheds on the commentaries. His point was subtle (and thus often missed by seminarians): If you want to know the Bible, read it. There is no substitute for that, and the stakes are higher now than in the past. That general cultural ambiance to which I referred with respect to passing familiarity is now eroding, replaced by distortions and blindness. If all one hears of the Bible is the paltry amount read in public worship, spiritual starvation will ensue as surely as the day follows the night.

When I was first out of seminary, I had to attend a regular meeting of deacons at the same hour on Tuesdays. A radio station in Sumter, South Carolina played sermons (not speeches) of Martin Luther King during the time I would

drive to these meetings, and I invariably listened to the recordings. Dr. King had been dead for more than a decade at this time, but the sermons were timeless. They were powerful, drawing on imagery in ways poetic and edifying. I had heard bits and pieces of his sermons in various newscasts over the years, but few actual sermons. What I discovered was how similar they were in style and content: "I have been to the mountain-top!" was the great word in his last speech, the night before he was murdered. Where did that image come from? Who else had been to a mountain-top just before he died? Who did Dr. King have in mind, and what work had he done? If you do not know the answer to that right now, how can the power of that speech be realized? (Hint: Look in Deuteronomy 34.) If you want to know the Bible, read it now and read it regularly. Don't wait to worry about it tomorrow.

- *The Rev. William M. Shand III, St. Francis, Potomac, Maryland*

## *Religion & Media*

The amount of coverage religion received on television and cable in the last few weeks has surprised me. This is a topic that does not compete well with popular entertainment. It's hard to present matters of faith within the time constraints of a sound bite. Of course, not all of this airtime has been positive. However, I was struck by the general tone of respect the final days and eventual death of Pope John Paul II received on the channels I watched. As one might expect, there were a number of oversimplifications of doctrine, and a few unfortunate mistakes and misuses of theological terms and phrases. (My favorite was when a CBS reporter stated that the Pope had been "read his lasts rites/rights," as if the Holy Father was a minor character in a crime drama. Last Rites are generally "received" or "administered.") But, by and large, I was impressed with the media's attempts to provide a thoughtful treatment of the life and death of an individ-

ual who, no matter what you thought of him, played an incredibly dynamic role in the Church and the world. What was so out of the ordinary was how difficult it became to "label" the Pope. What emerged from the footage was how complex a character he was.

Now, the cameras have moved on to the next story of the moment, and we can be certain that it will not be a story about the state of someone's soul, or the perceived holiness of someone's life. At least not on the surface, it won't be. So much of what we see and hear in the news is little more than sensational surface labeling that actually tells us very little about a person. At the center of every news story, every image, every sound bite is a complex individual with a soul and the free will to choose the path that soul will follow. But rarely do we even get a glimpse of that.

If we follow the lead of what generally makes it on television, then we are

encouraged to attach labels to everyone we meet. We are told someone is "bad" because of some horrible thing that person may have done. Then by implication, "good" people are those who have not yet been caught doing something wicked. That type of one-dimensional thinking deals only with the surface and ignores the complexity of the individual. Sadly, that type of thinking is equally well rooted in the popular religious culture. Labels abound in the religious world as much as they do in secular society. Yet again and again, Christ rejected labels for himself and others. He sees the whole person, nurtures the parts of us that are "good," and encourages us to let his love transform the parts of us that need some work. What Christ never does is drive anyone away, even when they repeatedly make the same mistake. In Christ, hope always conquers disappointment.

contain these word: "Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming." Jesus never gives up on us; he never dismisses anyone. He constantly loves his flock: the sinner and the righteous, even when both qualities are found in the same person, as they always are. If Christ is unwilling to condemn, then how can we even consider it? He seeks to love rather than label. Such news might not make it on television, but I am sure it is well received in heaven.

— *The Rev. Alan Gibson,  
Trinity,  
Rutland, Vermont*

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### *For Real*

Announcing the first "NICOTINE ANONYMOUS" meeting in the Whitby Ontario (Durham Region). Group name: "LAST CHANCE, NO BUTTS ABOUT IT" Location: St. Andrew's Church rear.

One of the last prayers offered at a Christian burial



**A PRAYER FOR**  
**New Jersey**

*Grant, gracious Lord, that we may find grace  
ever to plant gardens alongside the  
busy marts of commerce;*

*By the roadside, a window box of beauty; at the  
door of a city, a fertile plot of nourishment and  
growing things; by the gate of a nation, a place  
of settlement and welcome and the roots  
of a new home.*

*So, O Father, may blessing fall upon Thy  
people in New Jersey; and upon their coastlands  
and riverbanks and wooded hills; and upon their  
souls within. In their sowing let hope be never  
dim, and in their reaping no defilement, but  
rather  
thanksgiving for the bloom of glory  
which is Thine alone to give;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.*

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**WE RECOMMEND**

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[Books with ITEM number are available through The Anglican Bookstore, others are available from your local bookseller.]

*Graven Images: The Averillan Chronicles, Book II* by Barbara Reichmuth Geisler (Lost Coast Publ).

It is the year 1141, and the nuns of the Benedictine Abbey at Shaftesbury face new tribulations. The abbey is near bankrupt, threatening the completion of a much-needed altarpiece for St. Edward's chapel. Worse, the tranquility of the daily round of prayer and ritual is disrupted by the murder of Saviette, a maiden of the town. Suspicion falls on Master Levitas, who is a Jew, and thus a ready target for the intolerant townsfolk. Convinced that Levitas could not have committed the crime, Master Hugo, brought to Shaftesbury to sculpt the altarpiece, befriends the old man. Dame Averilla, now

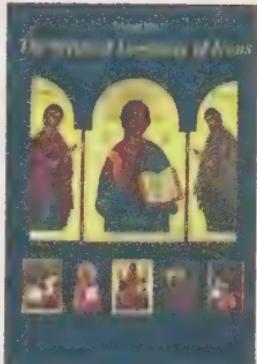
the abbey sacrist, abhors the prejudice as well, and suspects that Jared, son of the abbey's reeve, is responsible for Saviette's death. Averilla, Hugo, and Abbess Emma must shelter the falsely accused Levitas while they discover the truth, lest chaos topple the rule of law. Barbara Geisler's first novel, *Other Gods, Book I of the Averillan Chronicles*, won an award for Best First Novel, 2004 from the Bay Area Independent Publishers Association (BAIPA) and was a Ben Franklin Award Finalist, for Best New Voice in Fiction.

**Item#XX08T**

*The Mystical Language of Icons* by Solrunn Nes (Eerdmans). This lavishly illustrated guide to iconography explains through words and pictures the history, meaning, and purpose of Christian icons as well as the traditional methods that



religious painters use to create these luminous, spiritually enlivened works of art. Soirunn Nes, one of Europe's most admired iconographers, illuminates the world of Christian icons, explaining the motifs, gestures, and colors common to these profound symbols of faith. Nes explores in depth a number of famous icons, including those of the Greater Feasts, the Mother of God, and a number of the better-known saints, enriching her discussion with references to Scripture, early Christian writings, and liturgy. She also leads readers through the process and techniques of icon painting, showing each step with photographs, and includes more than fifty of her own original works of art. Deeply inspiring and utterly unique, *The Mystical Language of Icons* will inform both those who are familiar with the rich tradition of religious art and those who are not. It also serves as a powerful devotional resource in its own right, one that Christians everywhere can turn to again and again. Item #E908T



### **Because of Winn-Dixie** (video - Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment)

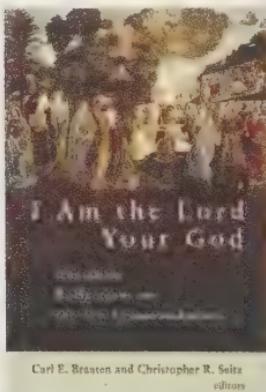
Based on the best-selling book, *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo, this movie tells the heartwarming "tail" of a young girl (Annasophia Robb) whose life is changed by a scruffy, fun-loving pooch she names Winn-Dixie. The special bond between them works magic on her reserved preacher dad (Jeff Daniels) and the eccentric townspeople they meet during one unforgettable summer.



*Half my grandchildren are adults or nearly adults but I still enjoyed this gentle, humorous movie and will enjoy it again when the younger grandchildren come to visit. - JDB*

*I Am the Lord Your God: Christian Reflections on the Ten Commandments* by Carl E. Braaten and Christopher R. Seitz (Eerdmans). *I Am the Lord Your God* explores anew the place of the Ten Commandments in contemporary civil society, their relation to natural moral law, their relevance for Christian instruction, and their pertinence to ethical issues such as abortion, killing, homosexuality, lying, greed, and the like. Written by an outstanding group of ethicists, theologians, and Bible scholars from various church traditions — Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist — this timely work argues unequivocally for the divine authority and permanent validity of the Ten Commandments in both church and society. While including the Judge Roy Moore controversy in Alabama and other pertinent current issues in their discussion, the authors above all call the church to remain faithful to its heritage — ultimately to the Lord God — amid our postmodern culture at large.

**Item # E901T**



Carl E. Braaten and Christopher R. Seitz  
editors

*The Truce of God* by Rowan Williams (Eerdmans). In an arrangement known as “the truce of God,” the medieval monastery of Cluny encouraged its feuding neighbors to restrict warfare to three days of the week. Centuries later, violence has scarcely receded from public life, with new acts of brutality and injustice reported almost daily. Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers,” and while his followers today may find quaint the medieval attempt at peace, Christians must continue to rise to the challenge of peacemaking. In this freshly updated edition, *The Truce of God* speaks anew to the realities of life in a terror-filled



world. Treating war and peace as spiritual rather than merely political issues, Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, perceptively diagnoses the problem in theological terms. He begins by probing the religious dimensions of our inner fears as exposed by popular "catastrophe" films and fictions. He goes on to ask candid questions about the implications of seeing violence as something that ordinary human beings never decide to do but are forced into. Finally, Archbishop Williams reclaims the Christian sense that peace requires a decision to live as a new community rather than returning to some sort of natural harmony. Discussion questions at the book's end help to make his observations an excellent basis for small group study. Item #E929T

*From Genesis to Apocalypse: Introducing the Bible* by Roland J. Faley, TOR (Paulist Press). A Franciscan friar, Roland J. Faley is currently in residence at St. Edward the Confessor Church in Syosset, New York. He was the Minister General of his religious order and taught in the US and abroad. Using the tools of authentic modern scholarship, he has written a book that will be welcome in introductory Bible courses at the university level or in adult education classes in parishes or dioceses. *From Genesis To Apocalypse* is a one volume introduction to the entire Bible. The author strives to show the unity of both Testaments in treating the major themes as they are carried through, all viewed in the light of contemporary biblical criticism. In a clear and accessible manner, Faley offers background on the two testaments, calls attention to their oral and literary life, sources, authorship, and the length of time required to put forth the biblical books. Then, he offers insight into the books of the Bible themselves. A complete introduction to the Bible aimed at high school and college students, as well as Bible study groups. Item#P053T





## DEATHS



✠ THE REV. DR. FREDERICK G. BANNEROT III, 72, in Charleston, West Virginia. Fr. Bannerot was ordained in 1965. He served several parishes in West Virginia. He also served as director of pastoral care for the Charleston Area Medical Center from 1980-1988. Fr. Bannerot was a former canon missioner of the diocese.

✠ THE REV. VICTOR E. H. BOLLE, 96, in Boca Raton, Florida. Ordained a priest in the Diocese of Milwaukee in 1945, he served parishes there until he moved to Jamaica in 1969 where he served several parishes. In 1979, he moved to Florida and served at St. Stephen's, Coconut Grove until retiring in 1990.

✠ THE REV. CANON YUNG HSUAN CHOU, 81, in Lapeer, Michigan. Ordained deacon and priest in the Diocese of Michigan in 1954, Fr. Chou served several parishes until his retirement in 1990 and

was an active clergyman until his death. He was a five-time deputy to General Convention, a member of the standing committee, and Trustee of the Church Pension Fund.

✠ THE REV. J. KEVIN FOX, 55, in Hot Springs, Virginia. For two decades, he was mountain guide and climber in the North American Rocky Mountains. Ordained in 1984, Fr. Fox served parishes in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Virginia, as well as in Episcopal educational institutions. In 1990, he became Headmaster of Stuart Hall School, Staunton, Virginia. At the time of his death, he was rector of St. Luke's, Hot Springs, where he served since June, 2000.

✠ THE REV. JAMES D. FRANKLIN, Jr., 52, in West Virginia. Fr. Franklin was rector of Emmanuel, Southern Pines, North Carolina at the time of his death. Priested in 1983 in the Diocese of Central Florida,

he served parishes in Orlando and Winter Park before moving to Emmanuel in 1992.

† **THE REV. ERIC GELB**, 76, in Portage, Michigan. A native of Poland, Fr. Gelb was ordained in the Diocese of Chicago in 1957 and served parishes in Nebraska, Indiana, and Michigan until he retired in 1993.

† **THE REV. CANON ROBERT W. GIBSON**, 77, in Winter Park, Florida. Ordained a priest in 1980, Fr. Gibson served at St. Thomas, Palm Coast, Florida before becoming canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Dallas until his retirement in 1984.

† **THE REV. CANON ALFRED JAMES GLENNON**, 84, in Sydney, Australia. Priested in Sydney in 1951, he served in Birmingham, England and at St Augustine's College, Canterbury, before returning to become Precentor at St Andrew's Cathedral. He was also chaplain at St George Hospital, Kogarah. He was appointed a Minor Canon in

1968 and an Honorary Canon from 1989 and was awarded an Order of Australia. Canon Glennon was the author of a widely read best-seller on healing, *Your Healing is Within You*.

† **THE RT. REV. ROBERT JEFFERSON HARGROVE, JR.**, 67, in Pineville, Louisiana. Bishop Hargrove served parishes in Iowa, Florida, Texas, and Wisconsin before moving to Church of the Ascension in Lafayette in 1987. Elected Bishop Co-adjutor of the Diocese of Western Louisiana in 1989, he was installed as Bishop of the diocese in 1990. His tenure as bishop was noted for the renovation of diocesan camping facilities, establishment of The Delta Ministry, and The Bishop's School for Ministry.

† **THE REV. JOHN T. HARVARD**, 57, in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. He and his wife, Susan, were SAMS missionaries in Peru from 1979 to 1986. He was ordained priest in Peru in 1983. In 1987, he became rector of St. Thomas', Morgantown, Pennsylvania

and served there until 1997. At the time of his death, he was chaplain at The Hill School, Pottstown.

† **THE REV. CHESTER "CHET" HARRIS HOWE II**, 70, in Chino, California. He was ordained deacon in 1960 and priest in 1961. He served churches in Apple Valley and Livermore before returning to St. Matthias, Whittier, to serve as rector from 1972 to 1996. When he retired in 1996, he received the honorary title of Rector Emeritus. Fr. Howe is remembered for starting a soup kitchen at St. Matthias in the 1980s despite local opposition.

† **THE REVEREND WILLIAM IVINS LOCKWOOD**, 95, in Lakewood, New Jersey. Fr. Lockwood was made Deacon in 1938 and ordained priest in 1939 in Torrington, Wyoming. He served the church in Torrington Field, Wyoming, until 1943, when he became the rector of All Saints, Lakewood, New Jersey. He served All Saints, Lakewood, until his retirement in 1975 when he was

honored as Rector Emeritus. A contributor to the *Chronicle* and *The Living Church*, he also authored other publications and books. He was the recipient of the Bishop's Medal of Honor.

† **DOROTHY MILLS PARKER**, 94, in Alexandria, Virginia. A Washington journalist and historian widely known for her coverage of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion, from the 1960's until her retirement in 1995, she was Washington correspondent for *The Living Church* and a free-lance writer reporting local and international church news and major events at Washington Cathedral. She was a member of St. Paul's Church, K Street. In 1992, she was given an honorary doctorate by Nashotah House. Mrs. Parker also compiled and edited a history of the Lees of Virginia (*Lee Chronicle*, N.Y. University Press, 1957) and for 12 years was Academic Secretary to the Dean of Wesley Theological Seminary.

† THE REV. CANON ROBERT PETTIT, 81, in St. Paul, Minnesota. Ordained a priest in 1987, Canon Pettit served parishes in North Dakota and Texas. He was retired canon of Gethsemane Cathedral, Fargo.

† THE REV. JAMES F. SCHNIEPP, 74, in Chicago Heights, Illinois. Fr. Schniepp served parishes in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and New York. He was chaplain at the Home for the Blind in New York from 1980 until his retirement.

† THE RT. REV. STEVEN TSOSIE PLUMER, 60, in Shiprock, New Mexico. A one-time ninth grade dropout, he was accepted by the Diocese of Arizona as a postulant, and embarked upon a challenging course of study and tutoring which eventually lead him to become the first Navajo priest in the Episcopal Church. Bishop Plummer was ordained Deacon in 1975 and Priest in 1976. He served churches in Arizona and New Mexico and also served as the Presiding Elder

of the Navajoland Area Mission. In 1989, he was consecrated as the first Navajo bishop of the Episcopal Church. He took office in 1990 and in the same year, College Divinity School of the Pacific granted him an honorary doctorate. In 1991, Nashotah House Seminary presented him with the same honor.

† THE REV. FREDERICK ALEXANDER POPE, 85, in Atlanta, Georgia. A veteran of WWII, Fr. Pope was ordained in 1950 and served parishes in South Carolina, Florida, Virginia, and Vermont. He was also Associate Professor of Pastoral Care at the Episcopal Seminary of the Southwest from 1964 to 1967.

† THE REV. LOUIS VALCOURT SHARPLES, 73, in Perris, California. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1958 in the Diocese of Massachusetts. He subsequently served parishes in Massachusetts, Illinois, and California. After his retirement from full time ministry, Fr. Sharples served

as Assisting Priest, Church of the Good Shepherd, Hemet, California.

✠ THE REV. CANON PAUL E. TRAEUMER, 80, in Spooner, Wisconsin. Ordained in 1950, Canon Traeumer served as a naval chaplain from 1952 until 1959. He then served parishes in the dioceses of Chicago, Milwaukee, Eau Claire, and Iowa until retiring in 1990. He was a member of the Society of Mary and an associate of the Community of the Transfiguration.

✠ May light perpetual  
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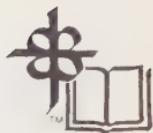


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Celebrated in her own day for her gospel hymns, Crosby was also very publicly involved with New York City's rescue missions and with other benevolent efforts. She rubbed shoulders with the likes of Henry Clay, Grover Cleveland, Winfield Scott, Dwight L. Moody, Ira Sankey, Jenny Lind, P. T. Barnum, and many other famous figures who people the pages of this book. More than two dozen black-and-white photographs depict the people and settings among which Crosby moved.

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## *Quid pro Quo*

*Quid pro Quo.* Translated from Latin, it means “something for something.” Over the centuries, quid pro quo has become our cultural way. It is the foundation of a market economy. Payment given should equal value received – and vice versa.

The notion of quid pro quo often spills over into our relationships. We will do something for someone else – with the intent, indeed the expectation – that someone will do something in return for us. Many of us have an invisible (and indelible) balance sheet which keeps track of favors given and favors received. And if it gets out of whack, so do we.

Quid pro quo has little place in the Christian faith and life. “Love thy neighbor” is not an equation; it is a command. Our challenge to love one another is not lived out because we think we will receive some direct payback, but because giving love is its own reward, and because we believe it will help bring about the realm of God –

sometime. We are challenged to be open to “the neighbor” – even when the neighbor doesn’t serve our immediate self-interest.

Our American culture places considerable value on the ability to “go it alone.” Independence is prized. There is some sociological research that suggests that the migration to the suburbs over the past 75 years has, at some level, been a journey toward greater independence – and greater distance – from one’s neighbor. Especially a neighbor who represents difference. And in the religious realm, to say “I’ve been saved,” which is a goal in many Christian theologies, is a kind of spiritual declaration of independence.

It turns out that God is persona – but never private. God is always disclosed in community. Salvation is not the end of the need for human connection, but is the restoration of connection between one human being and another. Salvation reminds us that we need each other, that we need to live in community.

One of the wonderful

things about being an urban church is that life in the city ensures the encounter with the stranger. Or with a different kind of neighbor. You can be anonymous in the city, but you really can't "go it alone." There are too many different kinds of people. There are too many differences to negotiate - and too many traditions of

kinship and friendship to learn about.

It is in that diversity - and because of that diversity - that our notion of God grows. As does our concept of love.

- *The Rev. Mark M. Beckwith,  
All Saints,  
Worcester, Massachusetts*

## *Religion Lives*

In seminary over 30 years ago, I wondered whether I was truly religious. I felt deeply called by God to do ministry as I understood it. I trusted the sense of communion in Christ and other Christians to be an identity I could gratefully live. But in that hothouse atmosphere, I wasn't at all sure which religious practices "worked," or how much religion I could live with.

Then through study, I met Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the brave, enigmatic German pastor who died a martyr's death in Nazi prison hands sixty years ago last month, just days ahead of the Allied

liberation. In jail for complicity in a plot to overthrow Hitler, Bonhoeffer wrote to friends, colleagues and family several books worth of letters that still challenge and inform faithful Christians and others.

I was especially drawn to his thoughts - provocative and incomplete as they were - that two terrible 20th century world wars had produced a "man come of age," stripped of innocence and fundamentally religionless." On a simple practical level, that sounded right. Lots of the people I knew, outside the seminary, were "religionless." Or so I thought.

Bonhoeffer didn't live to see his ideas tested, or to think further about them. Like many of us who love the church and live in it, he knew those who were actually religious. But listen to how potent these questions still are to the religious:

"Is it on this dubious group of people that we are to pounce in fervor, pique, or indignation, in order to sell them our goods? Are we to fall upon a few unfortunate people in their hour of need and exercise a sort of religious compulsion on them? Was . . . the western form of Christianity . . . only a preliminary stage to a complete absence of religion? What kind of situation emerges for us, for the church? How can Christ become the Lord of the religionless as well? Are there religionless Christians? If religion is only a garment of Christianity—and even this garment has looked very different at different times—then what is a religionless Christianity?

The striking thing is that, in spite of these important insights, we have reawak-

ened to a world in which religious people are more powerful than the thinking prisoner could have imagined. Spontaneous religiousness is all around us. Religious violence continues to work its woes.

And I face the fact that I am more religious than I was in seminary.

How do you deal with this kind of world? Is there a faithful and honorable way to be human and religious at the same time? Can we sound a sane, loving, humane religious voice in this clamorous America, and in this often dangerous world?

I think so. I pray so. I work for it, with so many of you, every day. It's a high calling. And it's a challenging and complicated one. Religionless humanity has not evolved. But faith is still a possibility, and always a gift. And, to use another of Bonhoeffer's insights, the Lord Christ is still the "man for others." Let it be true among us.

—The Rev. William McD. Tully,  
St. Bartholomew's,  
New York, New York



## AND IN ALL PLACES

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◆ A TIP OF THE BIRETTA to St. Paul's, Grand Forks, North Dakota on their 125th Anniversary. The main celebration was a Sunday Eucharist using the 1890 Book of Common Prayer and hymns from the era.

◆ THE DIOCESE OF NORTH EAST INDIA and the Diocese of Santa Maria Brazil each received grants from the Church Missions Publishing Company (CMPC) at the meeting of its Board of Managers. As a result of this grant The Diocese of North East India will be able to publish pastoral and liturgical material in the languages and dialects of its people. The grant to the Diocese of Santa Maria will go to publish a book of diocesan pastoral letters to help foster Anglican identity in the Latin American context. CMPC uses interest from an endowment put in place by West Hartford native Edith Beach and her sisters. Applications

for grants may be found at [www.ctdiocese.org/](http://www.ctdiocese.org/). The deadlines are 15 April for Spring grants and 15 November for Fall grants. The maximum grant is normally \$3,000.

◆ THE MAKERS OF A FILM adaptation of *The Da Vinci Code* will not be allowed to shoot in Westminster Abbey. The abbey said in a statement that it would be inappropriate, as the novel by Dan Brown was "theologically unsound." "We cannot commend or endorse the contentious and wayward religious and historic suggestions made in the book — nor its views of Christianity and the New Testament."

◆ A QUILTED TAPESTRY was stolen from Chester Cathedral, possibly on the orders of an American collector. Estimated to be worth £14,000, it was made by B. J. Elvgren, an American textile artist who fell in love with

the 14th-century Chester cycle of mystery plays. The tapestry depicts Biblical scenes performed in front of the sandstone cathedral.

**# ENGLISH HERITAGE** announced a £7 million package of conservation grants to be awarded to 83 places of worship, from Catholic and Anglican churches to a Sikh temple and a synagogue built in 1914.

**# THE ANGLICAN CHURCH** in the Diocese of Polynesia recently consecrated three new bishops to provide episcopal oversight to the varied ethnic groups that make up the region. The Rev. Gabriel Mahesh Sharma became Bishop in Viti Levu West; the Ven. Apimeleki Qiliho became the Bishop in Vanua Levu and Taveuni; and, the Ven. Dr. Winston Halpua became the Bishop for the Diocese of Polynesia in Aotearoa New Zealand.

**# THE US SUPREME COURT** upheld a law that requires state prisons to accommodate inmates' religions. Ohio

inmates, including a witch and a Satanist, claimed that they were denied access to religious literature, ceremonial items and time to worship.

**# A GERMAN COMPANY** launched a collector's edition doll in honor of Pope Benedict XVI, topped with a cherubic baby's face. Only 999 of the individually numbered dolls were made. The 16in-high doll wears white papal robes, a cross and, despite having a face that looks decades younger than the 78-year-old Pope, has grey hair and eyebrows.

**# A JERUSALEM COURT** sentenced a Jewish activist to four months of community

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service for distributing T-shirts with the slogan "No Arabs, no Terror." David Haivri, one of the leaders of the ultra-nationalist Revava movement, said that he would appeal against the ruling.

¶ EIGHT CHRISTIANS were arrested in Saudi Arabia by the Muttawa religious police. The police arrested an evangelical Christian from India who was on a tourist visa and seized a Bible and addresses, which led to the arrest of seven other members of an evangelical Protestant group. All forms of non-Muslim worship are banned in Saudi Arabia.

¶ THE COMMUNITY OF SAINT FRANCIS, founded by Mother Rosina Mary in London in 1905, celebrates 100 years of service. The focus of the celebration was a Eucharist at Southwark Cathedral which also celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. The Very Rev. Colin Slee, Dean of the Cathedral was preacher for the celebration.

¶ THANK YOU . . . A student at Zomba Theological College, Zomba, Malawi, and recipient of books and vestments from Operation Pass Along wishes to conveys appreciation "to those who give generously to your organization in order for you to be able to send them to us. I do remember them in my prayers."

¶ THE RT. REV. DR. JOHN SENTAMU, Bishop of Birmingham, was approved by The Queen to succeed the Rt. Rev. Dr. David Hope as the next Archbishop of York. Bishop Sentamu, 56, was born in Uganda. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams welcomed the appointment and described Bishop Sentamu as "someone who has always combined a passion for sharing the gospel with a keen sense of the problems and challenges of our society, particularly where racism is concerned."



## *The First Christian Conflict*

The first half of the Book of the Acts of the Apostles reflects the energetic building of the faith community. Acts opens with Luke's recounting of the Ascension and the disciples continuing to hide in their community room - fearing the ongoing wrath of those who condemned Jesus.

Then came the Feast of Pentecost. It was a Jewish festival of first harvest, and people came from countries surrounding Judea to market their goods and buy from one another. It was on this day that God acted in the Holy Spirit among the disciples, filling them with gifts that would enable them to speak boldly about Jesus and the Love of God. They were no longer disciples but Apostles - witnesses and proclaimers of the Good News.

Suddenly, things started happening. People were transformed, healed, empowered and focused. The core of believers expanded with incredible speed. Saul,

who was persecuting believers and who oversaw the stoning of Stephen, was transformed in a blinding flash into one who would be called an apostle himself. Now called Paul, he became an evangelist among the Gentiles, along with Peter. Lives outside the Jewish community were changing rapidly, as men and women put on Christ Jesus as Savior.

But, in Antioch, trouble was brewing. There were Jewish Christians who said that the only mark of salvation in Jesus was circumcision. *What?!* Gentiles had not heard of this, and when they did, they found it very disconcerting. Peter and Paul had been baptizing those who had come to faith. What was the truth?

When we come to Acts 15, we find Paul and Barnabas traveling to Jerusalem to talk this all over with the Apostolic Community. One of these was the first Bishop of Jerusalem: James, called the "brother of Jesus" (not the

Apostle James). James was chair of the first ever Christian Council, and they had many things to discuss. But the real topic at hand was what constituted entry into the Body of Christ: circumcision or baptism?

In light of the culture and community of the time, this disagreement could have split the new church asunder. From the time of Abraham, circumcision had been the mark of belonging to God. Yet, Jesus had taught that "unless one be born anew with water and the Holy Spirit, one cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven." The only "bible" that existed at this time was the collected writings of the Jewish people. They consisted of the Pentateuch (first five books of the modern Bible), writings of history and of the prophets, and the poetry that was much like a hymnal—Psalms and Proverbs. So, given what was available, the change from circumcision to baptism was a fundamental departure from sacred covenant.

After long discussion, much prayer and intense listening, we are told that the Apostles and elders agreed that baptism would be the mark of entry into the Body of Christ. In reflecting on their decision, they simply said, "It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us." A fundamental departure was now underway, and the faith community moved on with its primary task: proclaiming Jesus as Christ and Lord.

What prevented this community from splitting apart in the midst of this fundamental controversy? No one jumped up and threatened to leave or start his own community. No one used titles like "liberal" or "conservative" to describe those who disagreed. No one described themselves as "traditionalists" and those who thought differently as "modernists." In fact, Jesus was considered in his day a rather radical liberal—a subversive reformer. This was the basic accusation that the Sanhedrin had used to convince Roman authorities that Jesus was dangerous and capable of

sedition. Now, the very young faith community itself was experiencing conflict.

I am convinced that schism is a totally human invention. As I read the New Testament, I do not find any place that would remotely suggest that Jesus envisioned different sects of Christianity. Now we have more than 100 recognized "churches" and many, many more independent groups. All of them claim to be the way to the Kingdom. I am convinced that such actions are the result of ego and human willfulness. They are not actions of the Holy Spirit.

Recently, I watched the 2003 movie *Luther* on a whim. It proved a powerful

reminder of good intentions gone very bad. Luther always insisted that he had no intention of bringing schism to the Church. The Church (the western Catholic Church) had certainly gone awry; after all, the Church is a human institution making the bold attempt to live the Gospel in the world. We humans do dumb stuff ... even bishops, cardinals and popes. Luther, an Augustinian monk and professor at Wittenberg University, simply wanted to address the abuses of the moment with hopes of encouraging a shift back to a basic theological understanding of Grace. Those who followed him went way too far in the other direction: hence

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the Radical Reformation (as it was called). The response to this reform? More restrictions and a counter-reformation that became known as the Inquisition. The response to Inquisition? More radical reform movements. Here we are 500 years later ... no better for the efforts.

Dear reader, please do not misunderstand. This essay is not giving support to any side of any issue currently facing Christendom (and there are a number). My point is simple. Just because we find ourselves in disagreement over profound issues, we do not have a mandate to leave the current Body of Christ. I am convinced that, when a group has to resort to secrecy, name calling, labeling and judgmentalism, that group is in a dysfunctional and willful mode. Such modes are based on ego and hubris rather than upon the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit of God brings folks together. The Holy Spirit builds, empowers, nurtures and shines light within the com-

munity. It does not destroy, accuse, or fracture.

I put to you the basic elements of the Council at Jerusalem in the Acts of the Apostles as marks of a healthy community in conflict:

1. **Coming together.** From all sides and all areas, the Apostles and elders gathered in council. They trusted one another and entered into community.
2. **Conversation.** The group entered into purposeful, open conversation. They carefully presented their issues and their opinions.
3. **Mutual Respect.** No one called names, degraded others, labeled or judged. They respected the grounding of those with whom they disagreed.
4. **In the Open.** The council was "transparent" in that it kept no secrets. There were no "hidden agendas" and no secret documents.
5. **Prayer.** The community didn't simply trust its own thoughts and opinions. Everything was committed to intense prayer. We don't know how long this

lasted, but nothing happened until it was thoroughly discussed and even more thoroughly prayed through.

6. **Consensus.** This does not mean that they all agreed and went out happy. They did agree that it seemed to be the best and most responsible course of action to take. They were convinced that God was doing work among them. That is why they began their response: "It seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us..." Their hearts were open to God, and they were willing to go forward on that conviction.

Integrity is the ability to know where one person ends and another person begins. That is a definition used in psychology and physical science. In theological terms, integrity has to do with "discreet self." That is, the capacity to see one's self as a unique expression of God's Love in community with a multitude of others who are equally loved and equally unique in expression of that

Love. Moses had a passionate desire to look upon the fullness of God. Yahweh's response was direct: "To look upon me in fullness would fracture your mind." (An indirect translation of the Hebrew response, but quite close.) Instead, Yahweh passed by, and Moses only saw the rear end of God (truly a literal translation).

Each of us receives a vision of God. It takes all of us to bring that vision to focus. It takes all of us to bear witness to the fullness of Truth. There is absolutely no corner on that market! None! As a priest, my sincerest prayer is that, whatever vision I am given of God's glory will be enough to light the fire of that glory in the hearts of those around me. Only then does the picture emerge that bears Truth. In Jesus, we see God. We see Truth. We need to recapture the essence of the early Church's passion for community.

- *The. Rev. Frederick Mann,  
St. Andrew's,  
Kansas City, Missouri*

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## All Authority in Heaven and Earth

My first Old Testament professor was from Roanoke, Virginia. However, setting eyes upon him, you would not guess this. Somewhere between 1968 and 1978 (it was a very long decade) he grew his hair long and shaggy and began to wear, as Merle Haggard sang in *Okee from Muskogee*, "beads and Roman sandals." He even took to wearing, later on, Earth Shoes. After leaving Harvard University with his doctoral degree, he took up his first post teaching Old Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. Never has anyone driven so far as from Cambridge, Mass to Jackson, Miss. He did not resemble most of the Presbyterian clergy serving in Jackson. He also drove an old beat-up car. An old Toyota, if memory serves. Rather like the two old beat-up Toyotas that I once drove. Only his car had, in the place of the passenger front window, a black plastic trash bag

duct-taped onto the space where the window was supposed to be. And on the back of the car were two, and only two, bumper stickers, one on the left and one on the right; on the left: "QUESTION AUTHORITY"; on the right: "GOD'S LAW OR CHAOS."

Question Authority. God's law or chaos. We had no idea what that meant, and he would not tell us; because he wanted us not to be spoon fed the truth, but to chew on the meat and then swallow it and then say aha, I know what that is. He wouldn't tell us, no matter how much we begged him.

Well, the question that those bumper stickers confronted us students with then, now confronts us, here today, who have heard God's holy, ineffable and infallible Word from the pens of Saints Paul and Matthew in Romans 3 and Matthew 7, respectively. And that question is the question of authority. What is it? Who's got it? What does it look like when it is wielded? Or, to put it the other way around, what is the opposite of authority?

Many people have answered that question in the way that I would have answered that question for quite some time. I would have said, and maybe you have said this too, that anarchy is the opposite of authority. Anarchy is the opposite of authority. But I thought about that for a long time and I thought about those bumper stickers and now I am pretty sure I was wrong. Anarchy is the opposite of order. Tyranny is the opposite of authority. Tyranny is the opposite of authority.

You need not go any further than the current *Star Wars* film to learn this lesson. I confess that I was there at the very first showing of "Episode Three" in Birmingham. Throughout all of the *Star Wars* films (as has been made crystal clear in this new one) is this question of authority — this theme that runs throughout all of it. And we know that from that pivotal moment when, in that "galaxy far, far away", (which strangely enough resembles ours in many important ways) in that

"galaxy far, far away", a republic becomes an empire. And tyranny reigns. And the "dark side of the force" inspires it all.

Even if you have not seen *Star Wars*, surely some other piece of literature, some other play, or some other product of art has taught you this lesson. Many of them do. And even if you are not much for literature, or plays, or short stories or what have you, surely the history of the 20th century, and all other centuries before that, teaches this undeniable truth — tyranny is the opposite of true authority.

Is this not the lesson of the rise and fall of the Roman Empire? Is this not the lesson of King John and the *Magna Carta*? Is this not the lesson of this continent's colonial history and our own Revolutionary War? Is this not the lesson of Robespierre, his Terror and his guillotine? Of the Bolshevik Revolution, the Soviet Empire and the Gulag Archipelago? Of Mao and his Cultural Revolution, his bad suits and his fifty mil-

lion dead? Is this not the lesson of Adolf Hitler, his Putsch, his Krystallnacht, his Third Reich and his heaps of countless corpses? Has not the service of those whom we shall remember tomorrow, taught us this lesson? The opposite of authority is tyranny.

And most of all, above all, does not the cross and Christ teach us this truth infallibly and indelibly? Tyranny is the opposite of authority. Surely, that is one of the lessons, one of the most important lessons of Christ and his cross; of the Father's gift of the Son and the gift from the Father and the Son of the Holy Spirit. A smear campaign, false witnesses, Judas Iscariot, thirty pieces of silver, a Sanhedrin's star chamber, a ruthless Roman Empire and a gutless Roman governor all conspire in one, big, fat unholy conspiracy, with the Satan himself, behind it all, pulling the strings.

Their goal? Undermine and eliminate the One who said after his resurrection, "All authority on heaven and

earth has been given to me: Go therefore, and make disciples." The one who said, "I speak not my own words, but the words of the Father who sent me." The one who said most audaciously of all, "Get up and walk, your sins are forgiven." And they took up stones to stone him. Why? Because they knew that no man alone could say those words and mean them. Only God could forgive the sins which are against him and him only.

Sadly, this spirit of tyranny is very much alive and her magic is afoot among us. Even sadder, this spirit of tyranny is all too close to the hearts of many of us. Fear holds them fast. They don't know whether to turn to the left or to the right. And some simply buckle under the strain and stress of it all and want out. And it is hard to blame them.

Some others, crippled by this fear and this anxiety, which is the bad fruit of the spirit of tyranny, sit idle, their mouths mute for fear that they may give "offense" by

speaking of the offensive cross. And still others, I am very sad to say, are driven out. Driven out by this fear or driven out by those who wish them "be gone." Who don't even have the decency to give them a fair trial, their day in court; ones who have been inspired by this spirit of tyranny, whose ravenous appetite is wolfish.

Why? Because like so many throughout the ages, they have been beguiled by a gospel that is no gospel. Because they think they can justify themselves, establish themselves, make a name for themselves, save themselves by their good works. In this case, perhaps, the good works of tolerance and inclusion; celebrating diversity; fulfilling the UN millennium goals; divesting in Israel; and on, and on and on, and on, and on, and on, ad infinitum, ad nauseum. Say this, say that, do this, do that. Don't do that, don't do this. Exclude those people, include these people, vote this way, don't vote that way. Work, work, work, work!

Well this new revised, revised, revised, Revised Standard Version of the Gospel isn't so new at all is it? Was not this the false gospel that St. Paul himself in the letter to the Romans, and countless other letters, attempted to argue, and did in fact argue against, and this gospel is just as false today as it was when he rejected it then; and whenever it rears its ugly head. And the worst news of all (and here is the really bad part, and then I'll get to the good part) the worst news of all is that you and I conspire with this tyranny. We conspire with this false gospel, we tell it to ourselves, we preach it to others and we work it out in our lives. All too often we are beguiled by it. I'm beguiled by it.

I am not boasting. I am up here to say I am wrong. You are wrong. We are wrong. And God alone is right in what he has revealed, and in how he has revealed himself. God alone is righteous and we have all fallen so very short. His name is to be

praised; his cross to be lifted high. Whenever we wink and nod at injustice and evil, whenever we conspire in one way or another, by omission or commission, with the false gospel in all the ways that it works itself out in our lives, whenever we depart from the faith and order and morals which Christ himself has revealed in his church and by his scriptures, whenever we fail to love God with our whole heart and mind and strength, whenever we fail to love our neighbor as ourselves, whenever we sin, we cooperate with the enemy. We are traitors to the City of God, siding with tyranny against authority, with death and hell and with Satan against God and his Christ and his saints.

I really do love that hymn *Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?* Do you like that hymn? You don't have to raise your hands; this is, after all, an Episcopal church. Just keep it to yourself. Do you like that hymn *Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?* I like it,

really. But it has one problem. "They" should be replaced with "we." Were you there when we crucified my Lord? Yes, you were. And I was too. We were all there, our whole collective fallen race. Yes, we were there in Pilate's courtyard shouting, "Crucify him." We were there in the Sanhedrin shouting "Blasphemer." We were there with the whip in our hands, cracking it on his sinless body. We were shoving the crown of thorns onto his sacred head. We were there on the Via Dolorosa: mocking, jeering, spitting on the Prince of Peace; there too on Golgotha, gambling for his garments. We were there.

It was our hands, all together, that wielded the mallet that drove the nails into his holy hands. We shoved the spear into his sacred side.

But, the good news is that out of his side flowed precious blood and water that alone can cleanse us from our filthy sins. A torrent of love, so amazing, so deep that it can wash away all of my sins

and yours, and yours, and yours, and everyone else's. His body can alone make clean our sinful physical bodies, and his most Precious Blood alone can clean our souls. "By grace have we been saved, not of ourselves, not of works lest anyone should boast," but by Christ and by his cross.

Is your life a prison of your own making? Are you a slave to your passions? Are you tired, sick and tired of being sick and tired? Are you terrorized by the forces of sin, and death and hell? Are you trying desperately to be a good, nice, respectable Southern Episcopalian, and you can't take it anymore? Give up. Please, just give up. Give up and like St. Mary Magdalene, shower his feet with tears of genuine repentance. Say with St. Thomas, "My Lord and my God."

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

- *The Rev. Matthew Weiler,  
Cathedral Church of the  
Advent, Birmingham, Alabama*

### *From the Editor...*

## *The Glorious Confidence of the Children of God*

One day Satan was having a garage sale. There were many flashy wares and the demons were out in force shopping away at the various display tables. One particularly observant demon, however, noticed another table with only one item for purchase — it was far away from the others. The item for sale there, unlike all the rest, had no sign erect, but when he got close enough to see it, he found there a marker that said "not for sale."

When he inquired of Satan about it, the chief tempter just laughed and said, "Well, that's because I use it so much. If it was not so plain looking, people might see it is for what it is." Satan pointed to the tool and then said, "You see, this tool is Discouragement — it is the one tool which will work when nothing else will."

This story reminds us of the vital truth Paul is seeking to impress upon his readers in Romans 8. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." All that is necessary to be done for our life and our salvation — which the law cannot provide — has been accomplished by Christ through the Spirit in response to the Father. We need simply to receive that loving and glorious gift.

To trust Christ is to be adopted by grace into the family of God. No conditions, no quid pro quo, no catches, no extra codicils in the small print. "For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God" (Romans 8:15, 16).

Notice what Paul says: there is NOW no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, we ARE children of God.

Yet the tool of discouragement seeks to trap us into believing we are still guilty, still condemned, still unloved, still needing to meet some condition to make things with God right. Are there not few things more tragic in this life than a Christian who lacks confidence and feels condemned? If we feel discouraged, no matter what our gifts, no matter what our personality, we will shrink back.

No wonder Luther ended his daily devotions by imagining his sins placing Jesus on the cross and then he would turn himself around and say "Get thee behind me Satan, today is resurrection day!"

"See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 John 3:1). Let us move forward in that glorious confidence in the beginning of the 21st century.

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